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Montana SCHOOLS

January/February 1995

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Newsletter of the Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Nancy Keenan, Superintendent
Vol. 38, No. 3

The 1995 Legislature: an update

The following is a brief discussion of several legislative proposals affecting school funding and the education governance system.

office are jointly requesting legislation (LC 0259) to increase the appropriation for school facility reimbursements from \$1 million for 1994-1995 to \$1.5 million for 1995-1996 and \$2 million for 1996-1997. The legislation is sponsored by Representative Jeannette McKee (R-Hamilton). Under the proposal, low-wealth school districts selling bonds for school facilities after July 1, 1991, will be eligible for a state reimbursement for school facilities. Even with the increased appropriations

State of Education 2
Superintendent Nancy Keenan addresses the 1995 Legislature.

"I Love to Read" 4
Ideas from around the state for celebrating "I Love to Read Month."

Certification 5
Renewal units, certification reminders.

Behavior Initiative 5
Montana Behavior Initiative will help schools meet students' increasingly complex emotional and behavioral needs.

"Get a Life" 5
Career development portfolio project helps Polson students prepare for success in a changing world.

School Funding 6
A story in graphs.

Dispatches 7
Updates from OPI specialists.

Appropriation for increased enrollment

Montana's public school enrollment has soared in the last five years, straining many school budgets. Two proposals seek to ease the burden by increasing state support of education.

The governor's budget proposal requests \$24 million of funding necessary to maintain the basic and per-ANB entitlements at the existing levels and to cover the 4,000-student enrollment increase projected for the next two school years. As of January 25, 1995 (the 21st legislative day), no bills have been introduced to lower the basic and per-ANB entitlements for school districts.

House Bill 125 (Kitzenberg, R-Glasgow) proposes to establish an annual inflationary increase of state support. The inflationary increase, tied to the consumer price index, would increase entitlements by an estimated 2.8 percent for the 1995-1996 school year and 2.9 percent for the 1996-1997 school year.

House Bill 125 is projected to cost the state \$36 million more than the funding necessary to cover student enrollment increases at the existing statutory levels. When the House Education Committee heard HB 125 on January 18, a long line of proponents advocated passage of the bill. The committee tabled the bill a week later.

Special education

At its Appropriations Committee hearings during the second week of January, the Office of Public Instruction requested an increase in the state appropriation for special education of \$3.6 million for 1995-1996 and \$5.1 million for 1996-1997. The office said these increases were necessary to keep pace with enrollment growth, ease the competition between regular and special education program funding, and maintain the state's share of the 3:1 match required to pay special education allowable costs.

The committee did not respond positively to OPI's request and has taken no action to increase special education funding.

Educational technology

Two bills are in the works to provide state funding for educational technology. Senate Bill 101 (L. Nelson, D-Medicine Lake) creates a district technology fund for the acquisition of technological equipment, including computers and computer network access, and technical training for school district personnel. Under SB 101, a district could levy a permissive levy which would be matched with state guaranteed tax base aid.

The second proposal is OPI's proposal (LC 1237) to establish an educational technology trust fund using \$5 million of one-time revenue that will be generated by the Department of Revenue's oil and gas tax reform bill. The funds would be used to provide grants and technical assistance to districts, regional networks, and teams of teachers.

Funding for school facilities

The Office of Public Instruction and the governor's



A DREAM FOR MONTANA'S CHILDREN: State of Education, page 2.

MARK MELOY

requested, the legislation is not expected to fully fund the program, and OPI will have to pro-rate the funds among eligible school districts.

Equal educational opportunity or reasonable access?

Senate Bill 195 (Baer, R-Bigfork) proposes to amend Article X, Section 1 of the Montana Constitution to replace the guarantee of "equal educational opportunity" with a guarantee of "reasonable access to educational opportunity."

The amended language proposes that the legislature provide funding in "an equitable and reasonable manner, endeavoring to attain fairness to both taxpayers and school districts while rationally considering the needs of diverse districts."

"Equitable and reasonable manner" is defined as "a state reimbursement to each school district of a minimum amount for school equity for basic educational needs." The amendment goes on to say, "Any district levy for additional funding desired by each district may be obtained from district taxpayers only by a voted levy submitted to and approved by the majority of qualified district electors at one election, one time each year. The dollar amount, disbursed by the state, may not exceed the minimum amount allowed each respective district, with a maximum fractional increase or decrease allowed each year thereafter determined by enrollment fluctuations."

Creating a state Department of Education

Recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Reinventing Government to create a state Department (Continued on page 12)

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DEADHEAD

1995 State of Education address

On January 16, 1995, Superintendent of Public Instruction Nancy Keenan delivered the State of Education address before a joint session of the Montana House and Senate. Here is the text of that address.



“The state funding cuts made in recent years will not show up in poor student performance this year, or perhaps even next year. But I assure you, we will see the impact of those cuts when today’s first-graders take the SAT and ACT tests in the year 2006.”



Good afternoon Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, distinguished members of the House and Senate, Commissioner Baker, honored guests, fellow Montanans.

My heartfelt thank you for graciously allowing me the opportunity to report on the status of Montana’s children and our public schools and to share with you a glimpse into the future.

The best part of my job is spending time in classrooms across this great state. This past spring, I was invited to give a commencement address in Fort Benton for kindergartners. When I arrived at the school, the children were already lined up single-file at the auditorium door. They were all wearing mortar board hats that the principal had made. I was at the end of the line when the little guy in front of me poked the kid in front of him and said, “Can you believe it, Nancy Kerrigan is going to be here!”

Well, I’m not an Olympic skater, but I did have skates as a child. I remember skating in Anaconda at the Kennedy Commons around a 100-foot Christmas tree with every other kid in town. As the fourth of five children, my skates were, of course, hand-me-downs, but my mom would polish them, and they looked just like new.

In those days, I remember my father telling us that education would make the difference between shoveling ore on the smelter for the rest of our lives or having opportunities beyond our imaginations. It was a time when my parents worried about our future: Would there be layoffs at the smelter? Could we afford new school shoes *and* make the mortgage payment? Where would the little bit extra come from for Christmas?

But my parents had their dreams, too. My dad was the one who wanted to travel in space. When Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, my dad was moved to tears of pride in his country. He taught me always to reach for the moon and told me even if I fell short, I would land among the stars. I am sure your memories of growing up are as vivid as mine. We think of them as the good old days.

The children growing up today are much like us; but in some ways, their lives are different. Most of us grew up with a rotary dial phone; today’s kids use cellular. We had ovens; they use microwaves. We had records; Sony Walkmans and CD players seem to be permanently attached to their heads. We remember our first television set; they have never been without one. We grieved about washing dirty dishes by hand; they gripe about unloading the dishwasher.

We grew up memorizing facts and expecting to have one career for the rest of our lives; they will likely change careers at least five times. Our memories and experiences may be different from theirs, but as Roger Allen said, “In case you’re worried about what’s going to become of the younger generation, it’s going to grow up and start worrying about the younger generation.”

THE FUTURE

You and I have seen the waning of the industrial age, lived in the atomic and space ages, and witnessed the dawning of the computer and information age. There are fewer than 2,000 days to the year 2000. All information known to humankind will more than double in the next 900 days. At this rate, every two years, half of what our children learn in college will be obsolete. As a result, our young workers will be retrained 10 to 13 times.

Fifteen years ago, the personal computer industry did not exist. Today, it is more than a 100-billion-dollar industry. Microsoft alone employs 15,000 people and has a market value of over 25 billion dollars.

We can send information between Montana and the East Coast at a speed equivalent to a thousand books per second. At this pace, the entire Library

of Congress could be downloaded in 24 hours. The Internet reaches more than 134 countries and is linked to more than 20 million computer stations. Think of the learning possibilities this offers our children!

I could go on and on, but the point is this: Our world is changing, information is exploding, and we are charged with educating our children and providing them with the skills to live and work in the 21st century. We must plan, and we must act. If we don’t plan ahead, our children won’t be able to compete for decent jobs.

THE STATE OF EDUCATION

In the past few years, Montana has faced difficult financial times. In 1993, a 100-million-dollar deficit loomed on the horizon. During the 1993 regular session, 30 million dollars of state support was cut from schools. In the December special session, an additional 19 million dollars were cut. That’s a total of



nearly 50 million dollars cut from Montana public schools.

While the cuts were being made, school enrollment was growing by leaps and bounds. Since school year 1989-90, 13,000 new students have arrived at our school house doors. That is a growth rate of 9 percent over a short five-year period. Projections to the year 2000 show that enrollment will continue to grow by as many as 2,000 students per year.

When the state cuts support for public schools, local taxpayers are forced to pick up the tab in order to maintain excellence in their local schools. Last year, in 75 percent of school districts that held levy elections, Montanans voted to increase their property taxes in order to compensate for cuts in state funding.

Shifting the burden to local taxpayers in this manner has the same effect as an unfunded mandate.

When enrollments grow and state dollars shrink, per-pupil expenditures go down. In the 1993-94 school year, the state spent \$3,940 per student. This school year, that amount dropped to \$3,849 per pupil. Next school year, assuming the governor’s proposal passes, it is estimated that we will spend only \$3,771 per pupil. Montana ranked 22nd in the nation in per-pupil expenditures in 1991-92, 4 percent below the national average. Last year, we fell to 31st in the nation, 11 percent below the national average. The question becomes: Are we aiming for the bottom?

Let me remind you that our children are doing well today because of investments that were made over the past twenty years. The cuts made in recent years will not show up in poor student performance this year, or perhaps even next year. But I assure you, we will see the impact of those cuts when today’s first-graders take the SAT and ACT tests in the year 2006.

Under HB 667, passed in the 1993 session, a school is considered equalized when its budget for the district general fund is between 80 percent and 100 percent of the maximum budget allowed by law.

Today, seven years after the school equalization lawsuits were filed, nearly 25 percent of Montana’s school children attend schools in districts that budgeted *under* the minimum equalization level targeted by law. Furthermore, because state support of education has steadily declined, we are dangerously close to the level of inequity that prompted the underfunded lawsuits in the first place.

These circumstances make the governor's recommendation to fund the cost of new enrollment for this next biennium even more critical. I fully support and urge you to adopt his proposal.

SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

I cannot emphasize strongly enough that when school enrollments grow, the number of children who are disruptive and difficult also grows. Add to that the overcrowded classrooms and deteriorating school buildings, and you have a prescription for disaster. Every child has the right to a safe learning environment. The decisions you make with regard to school funding will tip the scale of safety for our children one way or the other.

Montanans witnessed a tragedy in Butte last year when Jeremy Bullock was shot and killed on the school playground. Weapons do not belong at school. Children who bring weapons to school must be dealt with quickly and appropriately. Schools, in partnership with police officers and community members, must also ensure that those same students who are removed from the school yard do not end up in your yard. We do not solve the problem by throwing those children back on the streets. Representative Debbie Shea is carrying our proposal, HB167, on gun-free schools.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education funding has been frozen since 1989. The appropriation for special education has remained at 33.8 million dollars. At the same time, special education enrollments have increased. While the number of special education students in some categories has declined over the past six years, the number of students with emotional disturbances has increased by 55 percent since the 1989-90 school year. Students who were traditionally served in residential treatment programs are now in community-based programs and attending local schools.

On the recommendation of the Special Education Task Force, I have requested 3.6 million additional dollars the first year of the biennium and 5.1 million dollars for the second year for special education. That appropriation adjustment can be made in HB 2.

If we fail to meet our responsibilities in this area, schools will be forced to continue using regular education dollars to meet their increased costs for special education. Parents, teachers, and administrators across Montana tell me this is one of the most serious issues facing local schools today.

TECHNOLOGY

Another priority identified by educators and parents statewide is educational technology. Students will need a solid background in technology in order to achieve in any chosen career.

Today, technology is

an essential part of a quality education.

A bill drafted by the Department of Revenue and supported by the Racicot Administration proposes to accelerate the payment of oil and gas severance taxes, creating a one-time payment of \$5 million to the school equalization account. Rather than artificially inflating the account with that one-time money, I propose investing it in a trust fund for educational technology. Senator Stang is sponsoring this legislation.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability has always been a priority in my administration. I am proud to report that the Office of Public Instruction has had clean audits every year that I have been in office. OPI recognizes the serious responsibility we have to the public in accounting for their tax dollars. In addition, we recognize that Montanans expect efficient government in Helena. When

schools experienced a 4.5 percent cut, OPI staff was reduced by 6 percent, a total cut of 9 FTE. We agree with the governor's proposal to again reduce personal services by 5 percent for each year of the next biennium. Although our statutory responsibilities have increased significantly over the past 25 years, OPI has the same number of staff today as it had in 1970.

RESPONSIBILITY

Montana is a beautiful state, populated with people who are hard-working, responsible individuals. The vast majority of our parents are loving caregivers, who provide the emotional, intellectual, and material support their children need. Montana's children out-perform nearly every state in nearly every academic category. We have so much to be proud of.

However, as the world changes, so does the condition of our children. More and more children come to school hungry, neglected, and abused. Many come to school having never been read to. An alarming number have no responsible adult to care for them or to provide a positive role model. Their parents are often the same ones who blame schools for their children's bad behavior or inability to learn.

Some parents lay all the responsibility for their children's growth on the school's doorstep, rather than accepting their parental responsibility for providing the care, discipline, affection, and academic preparation their children so desperately need. As parents, we need to take time out of our busy lives to help our children grow up. When parents demand that schools turn their disrespectful, disruptive children into model students, they, too, are imposing "unfunded mandates" on their schools.

Montanans expect their schools to produce mature and responsible students with high academic performance, ready for work or higher education. Montana schools have met this expectation for decades. However, if the state does not provide the resources to enable schools to do their jobs, then this expectation becomes yet another "unfunded mandate."

Winston Churchill said, "The price of greatness is responsibility." Let me leave with you a few messages about our responsibilities.

To parents, my message is this: Please accept the responsibility for your children's behavior, their preparation for school, and their attitude toward learning. Parenting is hard, hard work, and even the best of parents will face challenges. I urge you to set high expectations for your children, read to them, talk with them, listen to them, teach them, and most importantly, show them you love them.

My message to students: Turn off the TV, the Nintendo, and the Sega games. Read, study, do your best, act responsibly, be fair, and behave.

To my fellow educators: Set high expectations for all of your students and for yourselves. Welcome parents and the community into your classrooms. Be proud of your profession and your work. Your work is important, and we have great respect for you.

My message to Montanans who continue to support education with their tax dollars even though their children are grown or they have no children: Thank you. Thank you for understanding the responsibility one generation has for the next and for remembering that a previous generation invested in you.

For those Montanans who resist investing in education: Please remember how important education is to Montana's economy and that our quality of life hinges on the education of our citizenry. Ignorance breeds crime, prejudice, and violence. Ignorance threatens economic opportunity and well-being for each of us.

And finally, my message to you as legislators: Do your best. Work hard. Play fair. Montanans have great expectations of you. What you do here matters to the children of Montana. I am deeply grateful for your dedication.

Like Martin Luther King, Jr., whose life we celebrate today, I have a dream for our children. My dream is that all Montana children will have opportunities that enable them to become self-reliant, productive, happy, responsible citizens.

Education is the key to achieving this, the American Dream. Let your work keep the dream alive for Montana's children. Thank you. ■

"Although our statutory responsibilities have increased significantly over the past 25 years, OPI has the same number of staff today as it had in 1970."



"When parents demand that schools turn their disrespectful, disruptive children into model students, they, too, are imposing 'unfunded mandates' on their schools."



MOTIVATION, the heart of reading, fosters lifelong readers. One measure of a successful reading program is the enthusiasm and frequency with which students voluntarily choose to read. Research tells us that motivation plays a critical role in helping students become enthusiastic, active, engaged readers who read both for pleasure and for information. Therefore, in Montana the month of February is dedicated toward fostering a love of reading. On this page are suggestions for celebrating "I Love to Read Month," shared by schools across Montana.

Dillon: Friday Night Prime Time

The Parkview School Council in Dillon developed "Friday Night Prime Time," an activity that involved 130 fourth- and fifth-grade students and adult volunteers. Reading for enjoyment was the focus of this event. Participants spent four hours at the school sharing in silent reading and fun activities. At the end of the evening, the number of pages read were totaled, with an amazing 15,699 pages tallied. Principal Dick Jonassen remarked, "You could hear a pin drop in our school gymnasium during the silent reading time. It was special for me to observe so many people engrossed in reading."

During Young Authors Week, two authors and an illustrator visited Dillon schools and presented storytelling, writing, illustrating, and staff workshops.

Dillon culminated its "I Love to Read Month" celebration with children sharing reading experiences and projects with other classrooms in different grades.

Cut Bank: Reach for a Good Book

Nancy L. Biniek, elementary reading specialist for the Cut Bank Public Schools, shared the "I Love To Read Week" celebrations of the Anna Jeffries and H. C. Davis schools. "Get Your Hands On A Good Book" was the theme for Anna Jeffries School. Some of the slogans used to promote reading

"I Love to Read"—1995 style



were "Reach For A Good Book," "Hands Together Sharing Books," "Let Your Hands Do the Talking" (no talking throughout the school), "Handsome Day" (everyone dressed in their most "handsome" clothes), and "Get Your Hands On A New Book."

The H. C. Davis School celebrated with a "Discover the World — Read" theme. The week was designated as an "International Festival." Each class or grade chose a country to study for a week. Students learned everything they could about their chosen country. Lunches served during the week had an international flavor, and a staff luncheon the final day consisted of foods from around the world.

Each day, "W.O.W." questions were posted for students to answer concerning their country or the world. Members of the community were asked to volunteer by sharing or reading a favorite childhood story and their life experiences with students. They also talked about how reading is important to their lives and their work.

Whitehall: Marvelous Awesome Reading Club

The Marvelous Awesome Reading Club (MARC) was unveiled by Principal Dan Reum and elementary students in the Whitehall Schools on October 14 with the help of Governor Marc Racicot. Governor Racicot initiated this reading incentive program by touring the schools, reading from books selected by each class, answering students' questions, and encouraging reading.

The MARC program includes reading projects selected and completed by each grade level. Each grade will be evaluated on its reading assignments and projects and will receive awards

for progress three times during the year. Some of the awards include MARC T-shirts and certificates.

Whitehall Awesome Reading Buddies (WARB) suggested several activities for motivating yearlong reading, such as art and cooking projects that might follow the reading of *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*.

Wilsall: Don't Worry, Be Happy

Linda Zupan from Wilsall offers these reading themes: "Don't Worry, Be Happy" with a good book: bring something to school that makes you happy. "I Feel Good" with a good book: bring a book about doing something good. "It's Out Of This World": bring a book about the earth or planets. "Be Somebody": bring a book about a famous person, real or fictional. "Imagine That": bring a book about an imaginary animal, person, or event. "The Future is Ours": dress as, or bring a book about, what you want to be when you grow up. "We Are The World": dress or bring a book about a different culture or country. "Veg Out": bring a can of your favorite food to donate to a worthy cause. "Turn Back the Clock" with a good book: Dress as your grandparents would have at your age. "Have a Picnic": bring a blanket to sit on and read, or take a book out to lunch. "Rock Around the Clock" with a good book: dress '50s style.

Froid: Curl Up With a Good Book

The Froid sixth-grade class and their teacher, Camille Peterson, undertook the publishing of a newspaper, *The Froid Flicker*, to let the community know how they celebrate reading month. Their

reading month theme, "Curl Up With a Good Book," provided many ideas and activities for Froid School to celebrate reading.

Student editor Nick Parker stated in his editorial, "Books are priceless. So, go curl up with a good book and read." Student writer Shannon Qualley reported on the class's quilt project, in which each student brought a family quilt to class to kick off reading month. Students discussed the various patterns in each quilt. Math facts were used to color various quilt block patterns and decorate the borders. When reading their favorite books, the students wrapped up in their quilts.

Secondary students READ-ALOUD

Don't forget to read aloud to your secondary students! Reading aloud models expressive reading, transmits the pleasure of reading, and invites listeners to be readers.

Many of the books you read aloud in class should become a point of reference for all the other reading and writing done by the class. Reading aloud to your class provides an opportunity for the whole class to participate in an activity.

Several articles on this topic by Judy S. Richardson can be found in recent issues of the *Journal of Reading*, an International Reading Association publication. The September issue contains an article called "Read It Aloud" for the science classroom. The October issue offers "Great Read-Alouds for Prospective Teachers and Secondary Students," and the November issue contains "Read It Aloud" for the mathematics classroom.

Please share your reading and writing ideas for future editions of *Montana Schools*. Contact June Atkins, Reading Specialist, OPI (444-3664). ■

—June Atkins, OPI Reading Specialist

Upcoming reading conferences

Far East Reading Conference: March 11, 1995, Miles City, MT. Contact June Atkins, OPI (444-3664) or Sarah McGill (436-2637).

Whole Literacy Conference: March 25, 1995, Cut Bank, MT. Contact June Atkins, OPI (444-3664) or Rosy Battleson (434-5236).

IRA Reading Conference: April 30-May 5, 1995, Anaheim, CA. Contact June Atkins (444-3664).

Rocky Mountain Regional IRA Conference: October 19-21, 1995, Billings, MT, Holiday Plaza Inn. Contact June Atkins (444-3664) or Dr. Barbara Walker (657-2091).

Montana Schools (USPS 601690) is published bimonthly except July/August by the Office of Public Instruction, State Capitol Building, Helena, Montana 59620. It is distributed free to schools and members of boards and groups interested in education in Montana. Second Class postage is paid at Helena, Montana.

Montana Schools is published each October, December, February, April, and June. Deadline for articles is the first of the month prior to each publishing month. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Office of Public Instruction, State Capitol, Helena, MT 59601.

Certification update: renewal units, reminders

Renewal units: What, why, how

Some years ago, the Montana Board of Public Education adopted a process, recommended by the Certification Advisory Council, to allow more flexibility in the professional development element of certificate renewal. Hence, the basic measuring term was changed from college quarter credit to "renewal units."

A "renewal unit" was defined as the equivalent of one hour of approved program activity. Sixty renewal units are equivalent to six college quarter credits (10 renewal units = one quarter credit). With all of Montana's four-year colleges now on the semester system, the more common equivalent is 15 renewal units equaling one semester credit.

Renewal unit activities (other than regionally accredited college courses) must be submitted for approval to the Division of Certification at the Office of Public Instruction 30 days prior to the beginning of the activity. In-state workshops and conferences are generally submitted for approval by an organizer of that activity. Approval allows organizers to present certificates of completion to those who meet attendance requirements. Guidelines for application are available upon request (444-3150).

If individuals wish to apply for renewal units for attending an

out-of-state workshop or conference, a request must be submitted 30 days in advance to OPI's Certification Division with basic information regarding program and schedule.

As a certificate holder, it may be in your interest to inquire about renewal unit approval for any workshop that interests you. The workshop organizer might not have applied for approval, but might do so if reminded. Do not assume that renewal units are available unless specifically indicated on the workshop information provided.

Other types of professional activities may also qualify for approval. These include self-directed studies, curriculum development, and full-year mentoring programs. Unit credit varies, and limits apply to self-directed study (15 per topic at half the hour count), curriculum development (five per year), and mentoring (10 per year). Certified presenters may receive additional credit for preparing. These "special" avenues are currently under review and may or may not continue following further study.

General information and precautions:

- If you're unsure about any aspect of renewal units, the Certification Division is here to help (phone: 444-3150, fax: 444-2893).

- You are responsible for safekeeping of any renewal unit certificates obtained.

- If you are a Class 2 certificate holder, remember that as of renewals in 1997 and after, you are limited to a maximum of 20 renewal units by "OPI-approved activities." The rest must come from college credit (three semester credits or four quarter credits) within the period of the existing certificate.

- Submit copies of renewal unit certificates to the OPI Certification Division only as a part of your application to renew certification (on or after March 1 of the year of expiration).

- Changes made by the state legislature and Board of Public Education can change rules and laws. Stay on top of your professional standing. If you are in doubt, the Certification Division will be happy to provide information.

Certification reminders

Class 1 and Class 4A certificate holders (master's degree or equivalent): Renewal of your teaching certificate with effective dates from July 1, 1995, forward, will require 60 renewal units plus one year of successful teaching experience (or the equivalent) during the last period of certification. The renewal units may be earned from college credit or

approved inservice programs in any combination.

Class 2 and Class 4B certificate holders (bachelor's degree): Renewal of your teaching certificate beginning July 1, 1997 will require that 40 of the 60 required renewal units must be college credit courses (converts to three [2.66] semester credits or four quarter credits). This is in addition to one year of successful teaching experience (or the equivalent) during the last period of certification.

Class 5 (Provisional) certificate holders: The Class 5 certificate is not a "renewable" certificate. The Plan of Professional Intent on the application form identifies specific requirements for converting to a renewable certificate. If credit is required, this must be college credit. If you are not sure of the requirements for converting your Class 5 certificate before it expires, contact OPI's Certification Division (444-3150). ■

—Don Freshour, Director, Teacher Education and Certification, OPI

Polson students "Get a Life" with career development portfolio project

Today's schools face the task of preparing students for success in a work place that will differ significantly from that of today.

In the 21st century, 60 percent of today's high school graduates will work in jobs that do not yet exist. Technology will continue to change at an overwhelming pace, replacing more and more jobs and requiring students to change careers six to seven times in their lifetimes. Employees will need to be flexible and responsive to change. Some 75 to 85 percent of available job openings will be at the technical level. Therefore, greater knowledge of career options other than those requiring a university degree will be essential for students entering the job market in the 1990s and beyond.

Students will need to navigate this rapidly changing world. To smooth the transition from school to work, Polson educators have integrated a career development portfolio project into the district's curriculum. For the past two years, Polson has been a national demonstration site for this project, called the "Get a Life" portfolio.

Aptly named, the Get a Life portfolio charges students with responsibility for their career decisions. The portfolio, sequentially designed for grades 5-12, helps students track their own education and career develop-

(Continued on page 11)

Initiative will help schools meet students' emotional & behavioral needs

Over the past six years, the number of Montana children identified as having emotional disorders has increased by 55 percent. At the same time, Montana has seen a significant decrease in the number of children served in residential and psychiatric hospitals and a new focus on community-based services for children with emotional and behavior disorders.

As a result, more youths with significant emotional, social, and behavioral problems are showing up in Montana's local communities and public schools.

This fall, a task force was formed to develop and implement the "Montana Behavioral Initiative," a venture designed to improve the ability of schools to meet the increasingly complex social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students.

The task force, which consists of school administrators, regular and special education personnel, school boards, higher education, school attorneys, and state agencies, used many ideas from the Iowa Behavioral Initiative.

The Montana Behavioral Initiative will help educators develop skills and systems to ensure that each student leaves public education with social competence appropriate to the



individual regardless of ability or disability. Some of the initiative's goals include the following:

- Recognize exemplary personnel, services, programs, or schools that meet students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs.
- Provide educators with validated strategies for responding to challenging behavior and proactively teaching social competence.
- Strengthen the expertise of educators to be leaders in coordinating family and community resources on behalf of students with complex behavioral needs.
- Support systems-level

changes that enable schools to develop the social and emotional competence of their students.

Philosophical foundation

The initiative is based upon specific philosophical foundations:

- Education is not just for students who come to school from environments that helped them become academically inclined and socially acceptable.

- Educators need to evaluate their beliefs about students who are behaviorally challenging.

- Educators need to invest in the development of curricula, instruction, and services.

- School staff must have a commitment to ensuring the social, emotional, and behavioral preparedness of all students.

The Montana Behavior Initiative is still in its formative stages. However, the task force has already begun addressing the need to provide training on behavioral and discipline issues through the Montana Academy of Leadership Development and the State Superintendent's conference.

For more information regarding the initiative, contact Kelly Evans, Director, Great Divide Education Cooperative (846-2147) or Susan Bailey, CSPD Coordinator, Office of Public Instruction (444-2046). ■

Montana school funding: a story in graphs



School enrollment is growing.....➔

Between the 1989-90 and 1994-95 school years, public school enrollment in Montana grew by an additional 13,146 students, or 9 percent. Those students impacted school facilities, staffing, supplies, and budgets. Many schools are bulging at the seams with overcrowded classrooms. Enrollment this school year exceeds 164,218, the highest enrollment level since the mid-1970s. Montana school enrollment growth is projected to continue at the rate of 1,000 to 2,000 students/year up to the year 2000.

(ANB = Average Number Belonging. This number is calculated using previous year enrollment to calculate current year school budgets.)



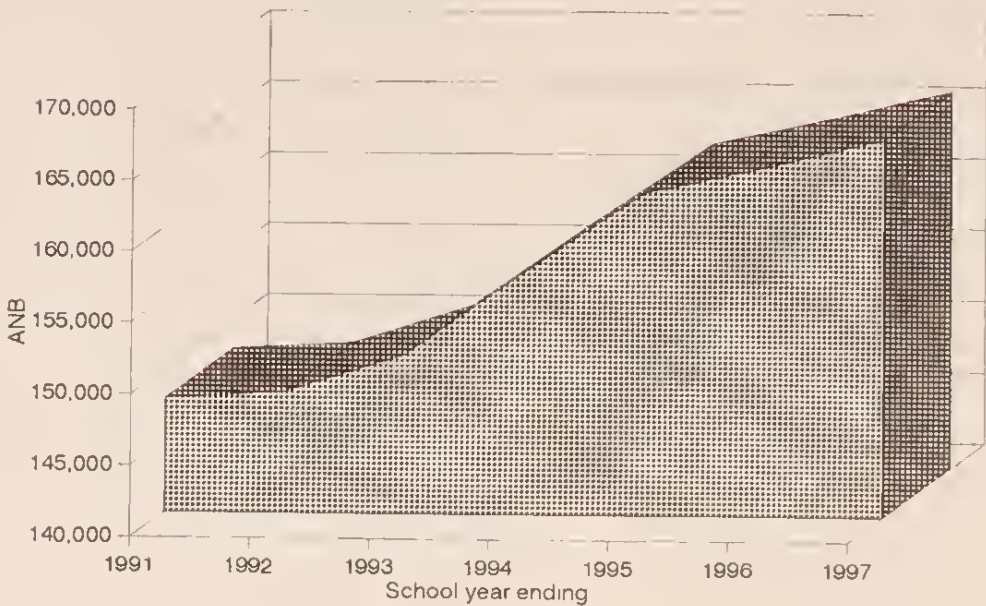
State support of education is declining➔

The state legislature has cut nearly \$50 million from Montana public schools since 1993. The state's per-pupil support is expected to rise slightly after 1995, reflecting the requirements of HB 667, the school equalization bill passed in 1993. However, when adjusted for inflation, state support of education shows a definite downward trend. In 1991 dollars, state general fund support of K-12 education will have declined by over \$450 per student, even if the Governor's budget is approved, increasing state support by \$30 million. Montana ranked 22nd in the nation in per-pupil expenditures in 1991-92, 4 percent below the national average. Last year, we fell to 31st in the nation, 11 percent below the national average.

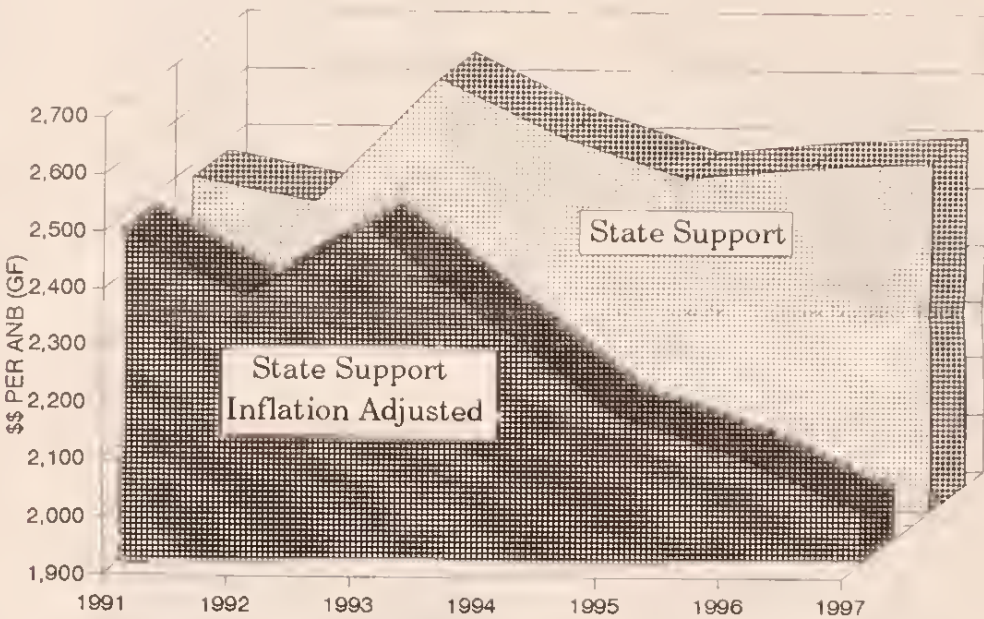


K-12 Student Growth (ANB)

Montana School Years 1991-1997

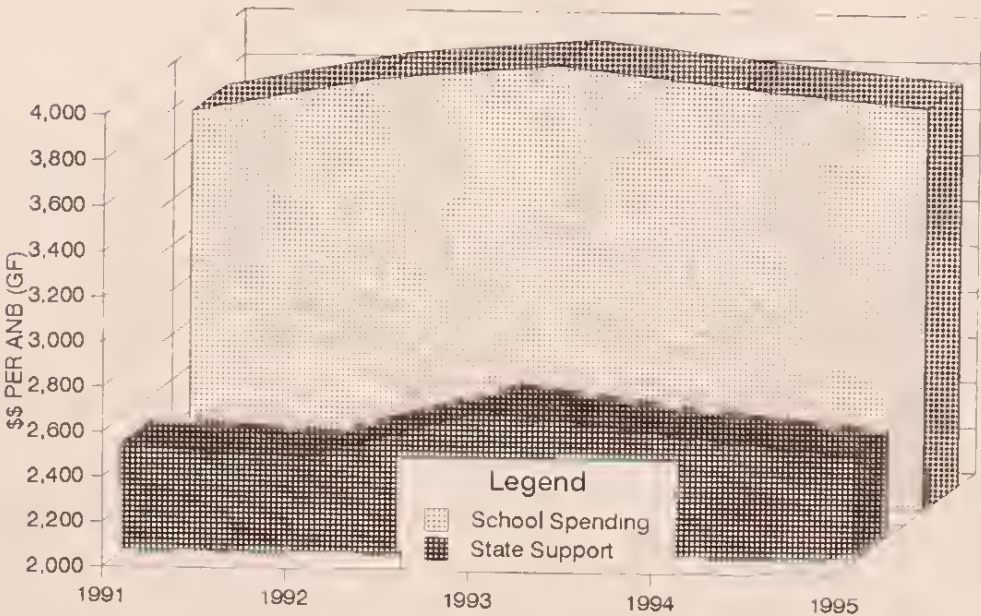


State Support for K-12 Education



EDUCATION SPENDING

Districts vs State



Local districts are being forced to pick up the slack

This graph shows the gap between state support of K-12 education and the amount of additional local taxpayer effort required to meet the requirements of HB 667 (the equalization bill passed by the 1993 Legislature).

As state support diminishes, districts must either cut budgets or raise local taxes. Under HB 667, equalized school districts must get voter approval for any budget increases. Across the state, districts are reducing per-pupil spending at a rate that reflects the reduction of state support for education.

While some people have the impression that school district spending is out of control, this is not the case. As a result of HB 667, the Legislature has significantly restricted school district budget growth. School district per-pupil budgets and expenditures have been on the decline since 1993. Adjusted for inflation, the decline is even more dramatic.

"Dispatches" are updates by Office of Public Instruction staff. Staff members may be reached at the phone numbers listed or by writing them at the Office of Public Instruction, P.O. Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501.

NUTRITION EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM (NET)

Katie Bark, Coordinator
994-5641

Children learn about nutrition in a variety of ways, including classroom activities, meals served at school and home, observing people around them, and television commercials. Even informal messages, such as the snacks served at classroom parties or the practice of rewarding honor students with fast food coupons, teach nutrition lessons.

Both informal and formal nutrition messages are everywhere, because food and eating are part of our normal daily activities. Informal messages are often more powerful than formal ones since they come from respected adults and admired peers. These messages may also have more influence on student behavior than formal teaching. But are these the messages we want to send? To provide a consistent, positive nutrition message to students, the school staff—administrators, teachers, child nutrition staff, and school nurse—along with parents, need to work together. These partnerships can help reinforce accurate nutrition education messages and encourage students to take personal responsibility for food choices.

The message

What can we do to make sure we give children a consistent, accurate nutrition message?

As teachers, we can discuss nutrition in the classroom and provide hands-on experiences through food preparation, cooking, and tasting parties. Integrate nutrition into lesson plans for history, science, mathematics, and language arts. Coordinate nutrition education activities with school food service staff.

As administrators, we can make policy and procedural changes necessary to create a healthier environment in our schools. Examples include: 1) providing inservice programs on nutrition and health to teachers and child nutrition staff; and 2) spearheading the development of nutrition policies for foods served or sold at fund-raising events and classroom parties.

As school food service staff, we can integrate the dietary guidelines into school meals through changes in cooking methods, food purchasing, menu choices, and serving styles. We can promote nutrition education through our menu formats, invite classes to plan a menu, or work with a teacher on a nutrition lesson.

As school nurses, we can provide nutrition education as a part of

student care, promote the importance of eating breakfast and lunch, act as a referral for students at risk of eating disorders, and assist with school wellness activities.

Helping students learn to make healthy food choices requires constant reinforcement through nutrition education activities, the promotion of child nutrition programs, and modeling healthy life-styles. The school team can build partnerships through many ways. You might want to try a few of these:

- Collaborate on the implementation of the new Montana Health Enhancement Model Curriculum lesson plans.

- Use the many resources available from the Nutrition Education and Training Program to integrate nutrition across the curriculum. These resources include curriculum guides, videos, computer software, and reference books that are available free of charge for a two-week period.

- Promote student involvement in the planning of school meals by developing a nutrition advisory council or conducting student surveys.

- Collaborate with your county extension service staff on nutrition or food service projects. These agents are great community resources and can assist with nutrition education efforts and materials.

- Promote eating five fruits and vegetables a day through the many materials available from the Eat Right Montana Coalition. Contact Kathy Andersen, MS RD (444-2672) for more information.

- Plan a nutrition event for students to celebrate National Nutrition Month in March. The 1995 theme is "Discover Nutrition-Anytime, Anywhere."

- Promote eating breakfast during School Breakfast Week, March 6-10, 1995. This year's theme is "Good Food for Fitness."

- Plan a "Kids Get Cooking" celebration to spark interest in nutrition and healthy food choices.

For more information on these projects, please contact me at the number above.

COUNSELING

Judy Birch, Specialist
444-5663

Career materials

Trying to find career awareness materials for elementary students can be difficult. However, I have learned about a career publication for elementary students that elementary counselors may want to review. It's called *Early Occupational Awareness Program for Kindergarten, Grade One, and Grade Two*, by Barbara M. Parramore and William E. Hopke. It contains a teacher's guide and student activity set (105 pages) for \$17.95. The 60-page student activity set alone costs \$5.95 (or 10 sets for \$40). Orders should be sent to Garrett Park Press, P.O. Box 190, Garrett Park, MD 20896 (301-946-2553).

CHAPTER 1

Ron Lukenbill, Specialist
444-2080

Name change

As of July 1, 1995, "Chapter 1" officially becomes "Title I." Therefore, our fall conference this year will be called the 1995 Title I Fall Conference.

Fall conference

We invite your proposal for a presentation at the 1995 Title I Fall Conference at Big Sky, Montana, September 27-29, 1995.

The 1995 conference will provide many opportunities to learn about new features in the reauthorization of ESEA, Title I of Improving America's Schools Act, and how instructional practices and program administration can be improved in keeping with the intent of this legislation.

Presentations and hands-on sessions will be scheduled to address the concerns suggested by participants at last year's conference. Special sessions will provide helpful strategies to benefit the novice and the experienced program staff alike.

All interested persons are encouraged to submit a presentation proposal to the OPI Chapter 1 Division office by April 1, 1995. A new presentation format will allow for some in-depth, hands-on sessions scheduled for two and a half hours in addition to the regular sessions scheduled for one hour and 15 minutes.

For information, please contact the Chapter 1 office at 444-5660.

Family literacy

The Chapter 1 Division is pleased to announce the winner of the Even Start Family Literacy grant: **Browning School District** in partnership with the **Blackfeet Tribe Head Start**.

CHAPTER 2

Kathleen Mollohan, Specialist
444-4317

As we head into the second half of the final year of Chapter 2, it is not too soon to begin planning for the first year of the new law, Title VI of IASA (Improving America's Schools Act). The five purposes of the new law are as follows:

1. to support local education reform efforts which are consistent with and support statewide reform efforts under Goals 2000: Educate America Act;
2. to support state and local efforts to accomplish the National Education Goals;
3. to provide funding to enable state and local education agencies to implement promising educational reform programs;
4. to provide a continuing source of innovation and educational improvement, including support for library services and instructional and media materials; and
5. to meet the special educational needs of at-risk and high-cost

students.

Funds will be available to school districts in the following eight new categories, now called Local Innovative Education Programs:

- technology programs, including professional development, related to school-based reform programs;
- purchase of library and other instructional materials, including computer hardware and software, which: 1) are tied to high academic standards, 2) will be used to improve student achievement, and 3) are part of an overall education reform program;
- promising education reform projects;
- programs to improve higher-order thinking skills of disadvantaged students and to prevent student dropout;
- programs to combat student and adult illiteracy;
- gifted and talented student programs;
- school reform activities consistent with Goals 2000; and
- school improvement programs authorized under Title I (formerly Chapter 1).

As under Chapter 2, the new law continues to emphasize parental involvement in systematic planning for the use of these funds. It also continues to support activities benefiting nonpublic school children.

Although the tentative allocation to Montana will be lower next year than it was this year, the portion available to local education agencies has risen from 80 to 85 percent. This decrease does not, however, seem to signal a continuing of the downward spiral we have seen with Chapter 2 appropriations in past years. Julie Wright of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) said in December that Title VI is very popular on Capitol Hill. "There is now a need to work on higher appropriation levels," said Wright. "If any program could get one, Title VI is on top."

TRAFFIC EDUCATION

Curt Hahn, Specialist
444-4432

1995 Traffic education conference

The Annual Traffic Education Conference/Workshop will be held April 30-May 2, 1995, at the Yogo Inn, Lewistown. MSU-Northern will be offering one semester credit. OPI will be offering 15 renewal units. The conference begins at 11 a.m. Sunday and concludes Tuesday at 1 p.m. Registration information will be mailed in March.

Renewed interest in driver education

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the U.S. Congress both have recently expressed interest in young drivers and high school driver education. I am encouraged by this renewed commitment to improving the knowledge and skill level of young drivers.

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

The following provides an overview of NHTSA's "research agenda and plan of action."

Traffic crashes are the number one cause of death for youth. As long as statistics have been kept, teenagers have been overrepresented in traffic crashes. The crash rate per mile for teenagers is four times higher than for adults.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is interested in measures to reduce the crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving young drivers. Currently, effective methods include laws that require the use of occupant protection devices, nonuse of alcohol until age 21, and loss of the driver license for major traffic convictions. Programs such as a "graduated licensing" system (learner permit, intermediate-provisional license, regular license) and the active enforcement of traffic laws have also been effective. For these laws and programs to be most useful, they must be backed by public education and information.

The House Appropriations Committee report accompanying the FY 1994 appropriations bill requested that NHTSA develop a research agenda and plan of action for a strengthened research program in driver education for youth. The NHTSA has prepared a report that documents previous agency efforts in driver education. These efforts include a major demonstration evaluation conducted in DeKalb County, Georgia, and a summary of a workshop held last year that resulted in numerous recommendations for reducing driver risk-taking and improving driver education. The report includes a discussion of why driver education may not be as effective as it could be and explains the recommendation for an improved novice driver education program as an integral part of a "graduated licensing" system.

The report describes the range of NHTSA's educational programs designed to reduce the involvement of children and young people in crashes. It concludes with a comprehensive plan for research, development, and evaluation activities designed to restructure and improve novice driver education.

The research agenda is based on 25 years of research, development, and evaluation in driver education and graduated licensing. The plan is centered on developing a cost-effective, two-stage driver education program as part of a graduated licensing system.

The graduated license would provide motivation to novice drivers and allow for progressive learning under controlled conditions. The first driver education stage would provide basic vehicle handling skills and essential safety concepts (such as rules of the road). The second stage (which comes after six to 18 months of supervised driving experience) would concentrate on other safety skills and procedures, including perception and decision making to reduce risks

taken by young drivers. By teaching safe driving skills after the novice has obtained behind-the-wheel experience and a minimum level of basic vehicle control capability, the novice can better concentrate on developing safe driving procedures.

The research agenda provides for procedures to extend the role of parents and other adults in educating and providing supervised experience/training to novice drivers. It also provides for an assessment of current simulation technology as a cost-effective learning environment for new drivers.

For a copy of the "Research Agenda for an Improved Novice Driver Education Program," contact Michael Smith, Office of Program Development and Evaluation, NHTSA, NTS-31, 400 7th St., SW, Washington, DC 20590 (phone: 202-366-5598, fax: 202-366-7096).

TRANSPORTATION

David Huff, Specialist 444-4396

Attorney general opinion

Montana Attorney General Joseph Mazurek has issued an opinion relative to a request from Lincoln County Attorney Scott B. Spencer which asked, "May a small, transit-type bus be used to transport students to extracurricular activities without meeting the requirements of the National Standards for School Buses if it meets federal safety standards for over-the-road use?"

Mazurek's answer was this: "A small, transit-type bus (which is smaller than a Greyhound bus but larger than a nine-passenger van) is a 'school bus' under Montana Codes Annotated 20-10-101(2) and may not be used to transport students to extracurricular activities unless it meets the 1990 National Standards for School Buses adopted by the Montana Board of Public Education."

Supporting his opinion, Mazurek stated, "At the time the exemption for an 'over-the-road passenger coach' was created, it is likely that small, transit-type buses were not widely in use as they are today. However, any attempt to expand that exemption beyond 'Greyhound-type buses' should be directed to the legislature, which can adequately address the issue of safety that I consider to be foremost." (Volume No. 45; Opinion No. 30)

Reimbursement challenges

Everyone likes payments delivered on time. At OPI, we process our pupil transportation reimbursement by computer. Too many routes are being rejected by the computer because the assigned bus has not been inspected, or so the computer thinks. Checking some of these bus inspections by hand, we are finding that vehicle identification numbers and other data are being entered onto the forms incorrectly. When the computer does its cross-reference, it cannot find the inspection because the

identification statistics don't match.

You can help us and the reimbursement process greatly by double checking the data on both the bus inspection forms and the TR-1s before submitting them to our office. Thank you for your help.

Transportation safety board warning

An accident in a Type A school bus (a school bus body on a van chassis, under 10,000 lbs. GVWR) has prompted this analysis from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB): "Because of the right-front vertical support structure, the approaching truck may have been obscured from the school bus driver's view five to seven seconds before the collision."

The bus in question was stopped at an intersection. The support structure that blocked the driver's view is next to a triangular window just behind the windshield. The 20-passenger bus was struck on the right side behind the right-front entrance door (impact speed: 65+ mph). Eight children were not wearing the available lap-belts (which are required on small school buses) and were ejected. Four died; the others' injuries ranged from minor to serious.

Schools need to evaluate defensive driving practices and develop strategies to compensate for this potential blind spot. Make sure students in Type A buses wear lap-belts as required by Montana law. Other recommendations made by the NTSB call for evaluation and redesign of the bus support structure.

M.A.P.T. Conference

The Montana Association of Pupil Transportation will conduct its summer conference at the Ramada Klondike Inn in Kalispell, June 21-23, 1995. Please mark your calendars.

Coats are still a hazard

Cords on children's clothing are still getting caught on bus door railings, causing kids to be dragged. This problem has been the subject of numerous bus recalls and is being addressed by the National Safety Council and the children's clothes industry; however, kids continue to be endangered. Please remind drivers to double check for children before closing the door and putting the bus in motion.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Linda Vrooman Peterson, Specialist
444-5726

Geographic Alliance Summer Institute

The first summer institute sponsored by the Montana Geographic Alliance was held June 24 - July 2, 1994, at the Seven Lazy P Ranch near Choteau. "In the Shadow of the Rockies" was a residential field-based experience for K-12 teachers that provided integrated instructional approaches through the five themes of geography, including lectures, field excursions, and model teaching

strategies. The Front Range of the Rockies served as the institute classroom.

Twenty-four teachers from across Montana successfully completed the program and graduated as teacher consultants of the Montana Geographic Alliance. Teacher consultants are available to assist in organizing, developing, and leading geographic education programs at their schools or in their regions with support from the Montana Geographic Alliance.

The 1994 teacher consultants include the following: Luan Atkinson, Stevensville; Raymond Berg, Montana City; Jill Caskey, Alkali Creek School, Billings; Donna Chambers, Superior; Lisa Cooper, Superior; Teri Cummings, North Middle School, Great Falls; Susan Johnson, Hall; Juline Kasmicki; Amber Malinak, Valier; Jackie McCann, Florence; Corrine Meldrum, Chester; Roxanne Mitchell, Florence; Beth Morrow, Rimrock School, Billings; Jean Muhlbeier, Newmann School, Billings; Mike Mullowney, Absarokee; Joyce Putsche, Newmann School, Billings; Pennie Rhoads, Hall; Wendy Rothermel, West Valley School, Kalispell; Rod Schmidt, Lincoln County High School, Eureka; Lynda Schwertfeger, Lincoln Elementary, Helena; Genelle Tennyson, North Middle School, Great Falls; Marial Tufton, Medicine Lake; Karla Zerbe, Opheim; and J. Spencer Yates, Browning Middle School, Browning.

Teacher consultants from 1993 include the following: Craig Cummings, Belt High School; Rose Duchesneau, Saint Francis Intermediate School, Billings; Maureen Edwards, Lolo Middle School; Larry Fink, Hysham Public Schools; Gregory Lucotch, Lewistown Junior High School; Jack McLeod, West Valley School, Kalispell; Brenda Wahler, Helena; Suzie Watne, Smith School, Helena; Lorrie Wolverton, Alkali Creek School, Billings; Judy Evans, Highland School, Billings; Sharon McDermott, Ponderosa School, Billings; Gina Morrison, Project WET Coordinator, Bozeman; and Barbara Walden, Kalispell.

The Montana Geographic Alliance is a grassroots organization. Assisted by the Geography Education Program of the National Geographic Society, the Alliance conducts programs in four areas: teacher education, public awareness, materials development, and targeted outreach to education decision makers. A second summer institute is planned for July 30-August 12, 1995. For information, contact any of the teacher consultants in your area or call me (444-5726) or Jeff Gritzner at (243-5626).

NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK

Patricia B. Johnson, Specialist 444-2736

Program highlights

The Electronic Model Congress (TEMC). Five Montana schools were selected to participate in The Electronic Model Congress, a three-

year project that will electronically model the U.S. Congress. Big Sky Telegraph will link schools in 14 rural states with one another and with their respective congressional delegates. TEMC is based on an NDN program that brings students together physically to model the congress.

Montana participants include Ray Maier, Cut Bank High School; Norman Anderson, Great Falls High School; Craig Cummings, Belt Valley High School; Peggy Miller, Billings Skyview High School; and Richard Hildner, Flathead High School.

Image-Making in the Writing Process. This K-6 arts-based literacy program accesses visual, kinesthetic, and verbal modes of thinking at every stage of the writing process. A presentation showing how students use art to write more richly was presented at the Institute for Aesthetic Literacy in January.

TALK (Teaching Activities for Language Knowledge). This program improves the expressive and receptive vocabulary skills and language in grades K-3.

Informal Science Study. For use in grades 5-12, this discovery-based program uses physical science mini-units based upon recall and use of popular amusement park rides, sports, and playground experiences, working in conjunction with NASA on the "Toys in Space" project.

Upcoming training

Project Success training is scheduled for February and March in Billings, Kalispell, and Dillon. Contact Chere Ring (255-3882) for details.

Consecutive training in projects *CLIMB* and *CATS* will be offered in Billings. Please call me for registration materials. *Project CLIMB* improves total school program by integrating much of the K-12 curriculum and assists teachers in diagnosing, evaluating, and monitoring student performance. *Critical Analysis and Thinking Skills (CATS)*, for all ability levels in grades 9-12, teaches students to make more rational decisions and to write persuasive essays.

NDN Catalog

The newest directory of NDN programs, which contains many changes from the old directory, will be available in February. This directory is available for the person in each district responsible for curriculum. Please call me to request a copy.

For information on NDN programs, please call me at the number above.

ARTS

Julie Smith, Specialist
444-4442

I am quite settled in to my new shared space at 1300 11th Ave. in Helena. My regular office hours are Monday through Thursday, noon to 5:00 p.m. My voice mail is always on, and I check it several times each day, so please feel free to use it! I

hope to be communicating with some of you via METNET soon.

Opportunities/deadlines

1995 Keep Montana Green Fire Prevention Poster Contest: In January, every school in Montana received an announcement of this 34-year-old event. The contest is open to all Montana school children K-12, including special education students. For further information, contact Mike Kopitzke (542-4251) or your nearest Department of State Lands office.

Professional development grants available for teachers to study and implement arts standards: The National Art Education Association (NAEA) announced this new grant program on January 2. Annual scholarships of up to \$1,000 will be awarded to selected art educators whose proposals focus on understanding issues, and implementation specifically relating to the Visual Arts Standards document. Scholarships may include tuition, room and board, and related study materials. This program is the fourth category of grants from NAEA Foundation. The other categories include Teacher Incentive Grants, The Mary McMullan Fund, and Research Grants in Art Education. For more information, contact the NAEA, 1916 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091-1590 (703-860-8000).

Montana Thespians Association Annual Convention: February 17-18, 1995.

Spring All Arts Event in Polson

The Montana Alliance for Arts Education has announced that its 1995 Spring All Arts Event will be held in Polson in April. The annual event provides a variety of arts education workshops and presentations designed to help rural teachers better incorporate the arts into their classrooms. If you are interested in attending or have a teacher or administrator to recommend, call Claudette Morton (1-800-WMC-MONT or 1-800-962-6668).

Summer institutes being planned

The Montana Alliance for Arts Education and the Montana Arts Council will support the work of four groups around the state offering summer opportunities for teachers to further their knowledge and skills in the arts:

- Media Arts Institute, Polson, sponsored by Montana Public Television Association and its partners.
- "Art Anxiety," Kalispell, sponsored by Flathead Valley Community College and partners.
- Indigenous Ceramics, rural setting near Whitehall, sponsored by Montana State University and partners.

- Drama: Bringing the Stage to Your Class and Designing and Using Portfolios for Assessment in Creative Writing and the Arts, Missoula, sponsored by the Hellgate Writers and partners.

For more information, contact the Montana Alliance for Arts Education, P.O. Box 2264, Kalispell, MT 59903 (257-3241).

Young Montanans Art Exhibit

The Montana Art Education Association sponsors an annual traveling art exhibition representing the artistic efforts of Montana children in grades K-12. This year, 97 pieces from students in 14 schools will tour the state. The works are divided into three exhibits, each of which will be shown in schools and colleges from Billings to Troy, Twin Bridges to Eureka, Great Falls to Columbia Falls.

If you are interested in being a part of this exhibit in future years (either by submitting your students' works, hosting an exhibition, or both), contact Charlene Greene, MAEA President, Hillcrest Elementary School, Continental Drive, Butte, MT 59701 (494-7092).

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Mary Cheryl Larango, Specialist
444-0516

Elementary Traffic Education Workshops offered

Spring workshops are being scheduled for Havre, Glasgow and Missoula to help educators learn about the behaviors and characteristics of children that lead to injury and death. The workshops will also explore prevention of traffic-related injuries.

The K-5 Elementary Traffic Education Program investigates the Journey to School and focuses training on pedestrian, bicycle, seatbelts, bus safety, and pre-driver skill development.

The 20-hour initial teacher training addresses childhood injuries, child development, current research, accident analysis, effective education techniques, legal liability, enforcement guidelines, program implementation, and evaluation. Community involvement is encouraged; parents, police officers and administrators are invited to participate. One undergraduate or graduate semester credit from MSU-Northern will be available for \$70 through Continuing Education. Registration for college credit will take place at the beginning of the workshop.

Call 444-0516 for registration information and schedules.

Helmets available

A set of bicycle helmets can be checked out from OPI's Traffic Education program. Call as soon as possible to reserve your time. The Regional Traffic Education Trainers also have sets of helmets that are available on loan when schedules allow.

Reunion!

All previous participants in the Elementary Traffic Education Workshops are invited to a barbecue reunion party on Saturday night, April 29, 1995, to kick off the 1995 OPI/MTEA state conference. The conference will be held April 30-May 2, 1995, at the Park Inn in Lewistown. A bicycle maintenance session and a new games session will be offered at the barbecue.

Low-cost bicycle helmets

A listing of low-cost helmet sources has been updated. Helmets are now available for as low as \$10. For your copy of this listing, please call me at the number above.

LIBRARY MEDIA

Diana Boom, Specialist
444-3132

Something new

There will be something new at the Office of Public Instruction this February: OPI is scheduled to become the site of a Media Center Satellite Network (MCSN). This satellite service is a pilot project offering 1,000 video programs from over 100 producers. It is being offered through the coordinated efforts of AT&T and Guidance Associates.

The MSCN contacted OPI this fall, inviting us to become an evaluation site. We agreed to be a part of this pilot project. When installation is complete, we will have a viewing area at OPI's building at 1300 11th Ave. in Helena.

The project's goal is to increase speed, reduce costs, and streamline the process for distributing educational videos to media centers throughout the United States.

Subscribers to the MSCN service will be able to preview, evaluate, duplicate, and distribute educational videos without the expense of ordering, shipping, handling, and returning preview tapes to video distributors around the country.

Programs will be sent via AT&T's new Telstar 401 satellite as part of the "educational neighborhood in space." Many well-known publishers will be involved in this project, including Encyclopedia Britannica, Coronet Film & Video, Kaw Valley Films, Sunburst Communications, Weston Woods Studios, Centre Communications, Carolina Biological Supply Company, and Guidance Associates/Center for Humanities.

To ensure a variety of quality programming, each publisher will be permitted only 10 percent of the network's full programming schedule.

Each month, MCSN will produce a complete program guide that lists, in detail, the videos to be transmitted. Teacher's guides will also be available.

Service subscribers will dial an 800 number to select and add new titles to their collection; then, MCSN will authorize the licensing and automatically debit the subscriber's account. All licensing fees will be split evenly between MCSN and the video publisher.

As of October, 1994, 14 states have become demonstration sites for the Media Center Satellite Network. I am excited to be involved in this 1990s technology-in-action project, especially because of the possibilities it offers for our rural areas. More details will be sent to each Montana school from the Network itself. I will be glad to answer questions as well.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

We will let you know as soon as the project is operative. After that, you and your class are invited to stop at our 1300 11th Ave. office when you're in Helena to sample the offerings of the MSCN demonstration project.

Good reads—Young Adult and Professional:

- Lois Lowry's *The Giver* — a powerful, marvelous, Newbery Award winner.
- Malcolm Bosse's *The Examination*, the struggle of two sixteenth-century Chinese brothers to survive and flourish—exquisite detailing and imagery.
- Bjarne Reuter's *The Boys From St. Petri* — a can't-put-down-until-finished suspense novel of occupied Denmark in World War II.
- James Heneghan's *Torn Away* — a young Irish terrorist is offered a new life in Canada, but will he or can he accept it?
- Eileen Dunlop's *Green Willow* — the haunting of Maddimoss House's neglected Japanese garden; set in Great Britain.
- Richard Peck's *Love and Death at the Mall* — for every person who has contact with the youth of today. Peck writes about the creative process and about how life is changing for parents and teachers as young people look for alternative power sources. Peck was an impressive speaker at the November American Association of School Librarians conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. He faces the issue of censorship head on; in fact, his newest book, *The Last Safe Place on Earth*, has that issue at its core. "It is a novel's obligation to be politically incorrect," Peck writes. "A novel is about the individual, not the group, and politics is not only the enemy of art, it's the enemy of the individual." My best wishes to you all for 1995. Please let me know if you would like me to visit your school; I will visit as many as I can.

GIFTED & TALENTED
Michael Hall, Specialist
 444-4422

G & T resource manuals

This fall, gifted education resource manuals were distributed to all schools K-12 across Montana. They were sent to each building principal with the request that they be given to the librarian to be placed in the professional libraries.

The manual, written by experts in the field of gifted education, covers the basics of developing and implementing a program, meeting the accreditation standard (10.55.804), designing appropriate learner goals for accelerated learners, and evaluating the district's offerings. A section on identification of high ability/high potential students is under development and will be sent to districts when completed.

High school districts received an additional book on identifying and serving high ability/high potential students at the high school level.

Flyers on appropriate strategies for curriculum modification and grouping were also included with the manual.

Districts that are developing or redeveloping their programs are encouraged to consult the resource manual and the materials provided with it.

Byrd Scholarships

This year, 23 Byrd Scholarships will be available to seniors graduating from Montana high schools. The honor scholarship provides \$1,500 per year for up to four years of college study. To apply, students must have a 3.60 or higher GPA, and a minimum SAT score of 1120 or ACT score of 28. Applications are available from high school guidance counselors. Application postmark deadline is March 3, 1995.

Gifted education grants

Pending legislative approval of funding, state-funded grants for gifted education will be available for the 1995-1996 school year. The grants must be matched with local funds and are to be used to develop the district's gifted education program. Currently, 79 grantees are sharing the \$149,250 appropriated by the last legislature. Due to the heavy demand for these funds, last year's grantees received only 39 percent of the funds they requested.

Districts that apply **must** have a comprehensive district plan (K-12, K-8, or 9-12) that meets the minimal requirements of accreditation standard 10.55.804.

Applications may be obtained by calling me at the number above or Janet Andrew at 444-1951.

Applications must be postmarked by March 1, 1995.

Gifted education report

The Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted has released results of its most recent survey of gifted education in the nation. The 1994 State of the States Gifted Education Report contains information on funding, student services, program directions, and educational reform movements in all states and territories. The report sells for \$35 and is available from me.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Jan Hahn, Specialist
 444-3714

Montana Writing Project Deadline

The deadline for Montana Writing Project (MWP) Summer Institute applications is April 1, 1995. The institute is an intensive, four-week program at the University of Montana. The program fee is \$800, which is most often paid by the participant's school district. One scholarship is available each year to a MATELA member.

The MWP trains teacher-consultants to conduct writing workshops and curriculum inservice for teachers and school districts across the state. The purpose is to increase the effectiveness of the teaching and learning of writing. Contact Richard Adler, Director, University of

Montana, Missoula, MT 59812 (243-5231).

MATELA honored with multicultural award

The Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts (MATELA) received an "Affiliate Multicultural Award" at the National Council of Teachers of English Annual Convention in Orlando on November 19, 1994. The council honored six state English teachers' associations for their efforts to add diversity and new dimensions to their programs.

Montana's award recognized MATELA's special summer seminar, the Native American Literature and Culture Conference, held in June 1993. This conference, the first of its kind in Montana, was organized by Lynn Hinch, Bilingual Education Specialist at OPI, and myself as a collaborative effort with the Montana Association of Bilingual Educators. The conference provided Montana teachers with the opportunity to study literature, oral traditions, and cultures with Native American artists and educators. The conference was scheduled to coordinate with the Sacred Encounters exhibit at the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman.

Twenty-one workshops were offered, as well as presentations by several well-known American Indian storytellers, poets, and novelists, including Joseph Bruchac, Luci Topahonso, and Simon Ortiz. Participants explored complex cultural issues and focused on preserving cultural integrity in the classroom. Some of the workshops were developed during a two-week institute at Montana State University that preceded the conference.

Bruce Goebel, Montana State University, and I accepted the award for MATELA in Orlando.

Summer seminars and institutes

The National Endowment for the Humanities offers many exciting summer seminars with topics such as "Southern Folktale Traditions," "Reading *Don Quixote*," and "The Poetry of Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson." Here's your chance to receive \$3,000 to immerse yourself in the study of literature.

The D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian is again sponsoring a summer institute on Native American Literature with a \$3,000 stipend and round-trip travel to Chicago. Application deadline is March 15.

Shakespeare at Stratford includes a tour to England and four credits in theater arts from Western Washington University. The tour is scheduled for July 1-July 16 and costs \$2,800.

During the spring, I receive notification of many such opportunities. Please call me for details.

Doublespeak Award

Radio talk show host and author Rush Limbaugh took first place for the 1994 Doublespeak Award from the National Council of Teachers of English. The Doublespeak Committee chairperson said Limbaugh's use of truth-distorting language,

broadcast over nearly 1,000 media outlets, has had a major negative impact on public discourse.

In announcing the award at the NCTE Convention in Orlando, Keith Gilyard of Syracuse University pointed out that the Doublespeak Committee briefly wondered whether the award's criteria — "grossly deceptive, evasive, euphemistic, confusing, or self-contradictory" — could be applied to the kinds of complete fabrications typical of this recipient.

The committee publishes the *Quarterly Review of Doublespeak*, which could be an excellent student resource in the study of bias, propaganda, critical reading and thinking, and language study. It includes examples of outlandish ways in which the masters of distortion use language to deceive. Call me if you'd like copies.

MATHEMATICS

Diana Oldham, Specialist
 444-4436

The Improving America's Schools Act was passed in late October of 1994. Included in this law is reauthorization for the Eisenhower Program. The "old" Dwight D. Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Program is now the "Eisenhower Professional Development Program." There are many changes in the new program of significance to those of us involved in mathematics and science education.

First the good news: The new program has special consideration for math and science programs:

Sec. 2206 Priority for Professional Development in Mathematics and Science

"(a) APPROPRIATION OF LESS THAN \$250,000,000. In any fiscal year for which the amount appropriated for this title is less than \$250,000,000, each State shall ensure that all funds distributed in accordance with section 2203(1)(C) are used for professional development in mathematics and science.

"(b) APPROPRIATION EQUAL TO OR ABOVE \$250,000,000. In any fiscal year for which the amount appropriated for this title is equal to or exceeds \$250,000,000, each State and local educational agency shall use for professional development activities in mathematics and science the amount of funds that would have been available to each such agency in accordance with section 2202 and 2203 if the amount appropriated was \$250,000,000, consistent with subsection (a), and are **permitted and encouraged to use the amount of funds in excess of \$250,000,000 that is made available in accordance with sections 2202 and 2203 for professional development activities in mathematics and science.**"

Since the appropriation is above \$250 million this year, there are some funds available for other discipline areas. This provides an opportunity that was difficult to manage in the past. Cross-curricular projects will be much easier to fund,

and elementary teachers will have much more flexibility in choosing inservice activities.

Now for the not-so-good news: State-level activity funds were cut from the grant, and higher education funds were reduced. The implications are severe. In the past, state-level funds have paid for or supported the TOTOM/MSAC Conference, Primary Connections Conferences, Community Dialogues, the Montana Power Institute, and many smaller math and science professional development projects. In FY 1995, there will be *no* state-level DDE funds for these projects.

The higher education funds are given to colleges and universities on a competitive basis so they can provide inservice opportunities to K-12 teachers in Montana. Since that portion of the grant was cut, the variety and number of inservice opportunities provided in Montana will be diminished.

Administration of the funds will also change in many ways. More strict program assessments will be implemented, application procedures will change, and more flexibility for local education agencies will be built into the process. The U.S. Department of Education has

promised some additional guidance by the end of February. If you would like more information, please call me at the number above.

SIMMS grants

Applications for SIMMS technology grants will be sent to all high school principals and math departments in early February. They are due back to OPI no later than April 14, 1995. Notification of awards, subject to approval of funding by the Montana Legislature, will be made to successful high schools by May 12, 1995. If you do not receive an application, contact the SIMMS Office at the University of Montana (243-2696). For more information regarding the technology program or equipment, contact Larry Kaber (756-5099). Questions regarding the application or funding process can be directed to me at the number above or Gail Gray (444-2089).

GENDER EQUITY

Kathy Bramer, Specialist
444-1952

Expanding Your Horizons

Expanding Your Horizons in

"Get a Life"

(Continued from page 5)

ment. Through various activities, students address the areas of self-knowledge, life roles, educational development, and career exploration and planning. These activities let students reflect seriously upon their future; set realistic goals; and see the vital link between education, work, and life.

Polson students are introduced to the portfolio during their fifth-grade year. In middle school, students complete D.A.R.E.; life skills activities; and units in health, counseling, and career development. During high school, they will continue to identify and develop skills through activities in the existing English, social studies, vocational, and physical education curricula.

Since career exploration is an ongoing process, not a single event, students move from career exposure to awareness to exploration and, finally, to planning.

When today's fifth-grade students graduate from high school, their portfolios will contain tangible reflections of their learning achievements, career research papers, and documentation of skills.

Students will also be ready for the next step in their lives: four-year postsecondary programs, two-year community college programs and associate degrees, specific vocational education programs, apprenticeships and on-the-job training programs, and military opportunities or other entry-level jobs. With this preparation, students will be able to use the career development process

throughout their lives.

The Get a Life portfolio aligns schools with national models of excellence. It also addresses the competencies outlined in the U.S. Department of Labor's SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary skills) report and provides a process of accountability and documentation for consistent interdisciplinary instruction.

"The Get a Life portfolio project is educationally exciting," says Principal Ed Longin of Polson High School. "Students are better able to see the reason they need to take certain courses and how those courses relate to their future career plans. Another benefit is the spark and focus it has added for our faculty in their efforts to work toward an integrated curriculum. The project has provided us with a common mission — to empower our students to succeed in a changing world."

Polson teachers, counselors, and administrators recently presented the Get a Life portfolio project at professional conventions and workshops. Another workshop is scheduled for March 9, 1995, in Polson. School districts are encouraged to send an interdisciplinary team to learn about the project. The workshop is approved for five teacher renewal units. A \$10 registration fee will cover costs of materials and refreshments. For more information, contact Sherry Jones, Polson High School (883-6350). ■

—The Polson Career Development Project Team

Science and Mathematics Career Conferences for Montana students are designed to increase young women's interest in math and science, foster awareness of career opportunities for women in math and science-related fields, and give students an opportunity to meet and form personal contact with women working in nontraditional professions. Below is the schedule for 1995 conferences:

Billings: Rocky Mountain College, April 8, grades 6-12. Contact Nancy Downing (657-1050).

Bozeman: Montana State University, March 25, 1995, grades 6-12. Contact Stacy Jovack (222-3407).

Butte: Montana Tech, March 25, grades 6-12. Contact Denise Solko (496-4442).

Corvallis: Corvallis School, March 22, grades 6-12. Contact Sara Schumacher (961-3201).

Great Falls: College of Great Falls, March 11, grades 6-8. Contact Lee Niebuhr (727-2220).

Helena: Carroll College, March 8, grades 6-8. Contact Pat Reichert (444-2410).

Kalispell: Flathead Valley Community College, April 1, grades 6-12. Contact Jean Robbins (755-8600 - work, 755-6395 - home)

Missoula: Hellgate Middle School, April 7, grades 6-12. Contact Cindy Babon (549-9835).

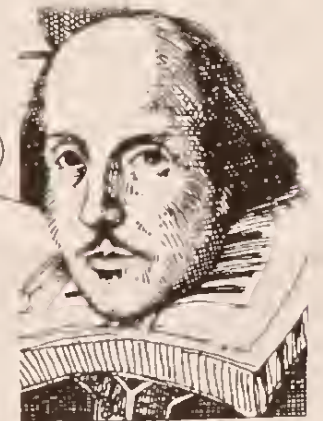
Et Cetera

Young People's Theatre

Shakespeare in the Parks presents Young People's Theatre, a summer drama camp designed for youth ages 12-18 who are serious about acting. The two-week performance program will feature workshops, rehearsals, and a final performance at Bozeman's Sweet Pea Festival of the Arts. Workshops will include Stage Combat, Musical Theatre, Mask Work, and Improvisation. The camp will run July 23-August 4. Tuition is \$450 per student and includes housing and meals. Contact Stephanie Campbell (994-5883).

Shakespeare in the Schools

Shakespeare in the Parks is planning its fall 1995 Shakespeare in the Schools statewide tour. The program offers a 50-minute theatrical production and two workshops. This is the company's third year for school tours. Because of the increase in requests, the company will send out two separate teams of actors. The sponsorship fee ranges from \$295 to \$395, depending on the size of the school. For more information, contact Moira Haggerty (994-5885).



UM teacher education programs draws recognition

The University of Montana has the state's only nationally recognized programs in the areas of English/language arts education, science education, social studies education, and school psychology, according to Audrey Peterson, chair of UM's Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

The nationally recognized programs are listed in "Teacher Preparation: A Guide to Colleges and Universities, 1994-95," a new publication from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Other good news for UM's School of Education came this fall when the Montana Board of Education awarded full approval of all standards reviewed for UM's teacher education programs, Peterson said.

Tech prep/school-to-work conference

A state conference on tech prep and school-to-work transition will be held in Butte at the Copper King Inn, March 29-31, 1995. The conference, called "Making the Connection," will focus on making connections between education and business, teachers and subject areas, classrooms and the workplace, schools and parents, secondary and postsecondary institutions, and students and counselors.

Topics will include developing business, labor, and community partnerships; using applied academics and curriculum integration; helping students develop career paths; using portfolio assessment; and more. The conference is for educators, business representatives and employees, policy makers, parents and school board members, human resource and job placement personnel, curriculum developers and department chairs, labor leaders, college presidents and deans of faculty, counselors, and economic developers.

Registration is \$85 by March 1, 1995, and \$125 after March 1. Certification renewal units and graduate credits are available. For more information, contact Ray Haffey (563-5269).

Dillon team presents at national middle school convention

The "specialist team" at Dillon Middle School was chosen to present at the National Middle School Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, November 3-6, 1994.

The team presented a session on the formation of a specialist team. Dillon Middle School has one of the only specialist teams in the nation. Each of the specialists teaches a special elective course to all middle school students, working through a series of "odysseys" that have brought state and national attention to the school.

Bulletin Board

Listings in the Bulletin Board do not necessarily imply endorsement by the Office of Public Instruction.

Montana Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

The Annual MASCD Conference and the Montana Assessment Partnership preconference workshop are planned for March 8-10, 1995, in Missoula at the Holiday Inn Parkside.

On March 9-10, the program will focus on outcome-based education with featured speaker, Dr. Bill Spady, Director of High Success Network, Colorado, and the Link to Expanded Assessment presented by Dr. Ron Brandt, executive editor of *Educational Leadership*.

On March 8, the Montana Assessment Partnership (MAP) will hold a day-long preconference workshop on assessment. This partnership includes teachers, administrators, school district curriculum directors, curriculum consortium directors, and specialists who are interested in furthering best practices in student and program assessments in Montana schools. For information, contact Dave Puyear, Golden Triangle Cooperative (434-2774).

Youth conflict prevention

A conference on youth conflict prevention and resolution will be presented Saturday, February 25, 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Mary Alice Fortin Health Conference Center located in the Deaconess Medical Center in Billings.

The conference is designed for teens, parents, educators, social workers, college students, professional counselors, prospective teachers, and youth leaders.

Dr. Jeffrey Sanders, a consultant in cultural sensitivity training and

cross-cultural communication, will be the keynote speaker. He will also lead a workshop focusing on the diverse relationships that occur when we exist in many cultures (age, gender, profession, and community) at the same time.

Carol Clapper will present a sectional on Second Step, a violence prevention curriculum used in Billings School District 2. This curriculum is a skills program designed to reduce impulsive, aggressive behaviors and improve social behavior.

A workshop for middle and high school students will explore conflict and methods of resolution.

The conference will be cosponsored by American Association of University Women, Billings branch, and Treasure Trails Girl Scout Council. Continuing education credit is available. Registration fee is \$15/person; \$10 for students. After February 20, add a \$5 late fee. For more information, call 259-2158.

Math and science assessment

An Eisenhower project directed by Gerald Kulm will offer training in alternative assessment for math and science teachers, grades 4-10. The workshops will be held at the MSU and UM campuses in Bozeman, Billings, Dillon, Havre, and Missoula. Each two-day workshop will consist of 12 hours of training. Workshops will take place February 24-25 and March 3-4, 1995. Continuing education credit and college credit are available. Contact Gerald Kulm, STEP Project, MSU-Bozeman S9717 (994-S6SS).

Band uniforms available

The Wolf Point School District would like to find a home for about 65 maroon and white band uniforms. Uniforms include pants, coats, shields, hats, and plumes. Best offer takes them. Contact Carolyn Havens, Business Manager, Wolf Point School District #4S-4SA, 220 4th Ave. S., Wolf Point, MT S9201 (653-2361).

Legislative update

(Continued from page 1)

of Education are found in two bills carried by Representative Sonny Hanson (R-Billings). House Bill 228 proposes an amendment to the Montana Constitution to eliminate the elected office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the appointed Board of Public Education.

If the constitutional amendment is approved by voters, the state superintendent would be replaced by a state director of education appointed by the governor. The Board of Public Education would be replaced by a state education commission that would serve in an advisory capacity to the director of the Department of Education. The state superintendent would no longer serve on the state land board, which oversees management of state school trust lands. The effective date of the constitutional amendment would be January 1, 2001.

House Bill 229 proposes to eliminate the constitutionally created Board

CALENDAR

February 1995

20-21: Mandt Training, Butte—Susan Bailey, OPI, 444-2046

March 1995

3-4: Mandt Training, Dillon—Susan Bailey, OPI, 444-2046
8-10: MASCD Annual Conference and Map Preconference Workshop, Missoula
8-10: Youth at Risk Conference: "Working with Youth and Families: Current Issues; Future Trends"—Curt Campbell, Opportunities Inc., Great Falls, 761-0310
9-10: Montana ASCD, Missoula—Dave Puyear, 434-2745
9-11: Children's Defense Fund Annual National Conference, Seattle, WA—CDF, Fax 301-353-1808
11: Far East Reading Conference, Miles City—June Atkins, OPI, 444-3664
20: Drug-Free Schools Regional Meeting, Helena—Rick Chiotti or Judy Birch, OPI, 444-1964
21: Drug-Free Schools Regional Meeting, Billings—Rick Chiotti, OPI, 444-1964
21: Drug-Free Schools Regional Meeting, Missoula—Judy Birch, OPI, 444-1964
22: Drug-Free Schools Regional Meeting, Sidney—Rick Chiotti, OPI, 444-1964
23: Drug-Free Schools Regional Meeting, Shelby—Judy Birch, OPI, 444-1964
23-24: Board of Public Education—Jeannie Worsech, 444-0302
25: Whole Literacy Conference, Cut Bank—June Atkins, OPI, 444-3664
27-28: Mandt Training, Bozeman—Susan Bailey, OPI, 444-2046
30-31: Mandt Training, Great Falls—Susan Bailey, OPI, 444-2046

April 1995

1: Northwest Reading Conference, Kalispell—Diane Taylor, 257-2301, or June Atkins, 444-3664

3-4: Mandt Training, Glasgow—Susan Bailey, OPI, 444-2046
5-6: Mandt Training, Billings—Susan Bailey, OPI, 444-2046
5-7: Montana AGATE Convention, Billings—Stephanie Smith, 255-3567
7: Montana Geography Bee, Colonial Inn, Helena—Linda Vrooman Peterson, OPI, 444-S726
19-21: Montana CEC Special Education Conference on disabilities, Butte—Center for Continuing Education, U of M, 243-4623
27-28: Certification Advisory Council (CSPAC), Havre—Peter Donovan, 444-0301
30-May 2: Traffic Education Conference, Lewistown—Curt Hahn, OPI, 444-4432

May 1995

5-6: Mandt Training, Havre—Susan Bailey, OPI, 444-2046
25-26: Board of Public Education—Jeannie Worsech, 444-0302

June 1995

12-16: Montana Agriculture Education Update Conference, Bozeman—Leonard Lombardi, OPI, 444-4451
12-16: Montana Institute for Effective Teaching of American Indian Children, College of Great Falls—Bob Parsley, OPI, 444-3013
21: Montana Assoc. for Pupil Transportation Conference, Kalispell—Helen Hagen, 454-6776
26-29: NASDTEC Annual Conference, Whitefish—Don Freshour, OPI, 444-2577

July 1995

20-21: Certification Advisory Council (CSPAC), Helena—Peter Donovan, 444-0301
31-August 3: Literacy Learning in the Classroom Summer Institute, Polson—Elaine Meeks, 883-6329.

of Regents of Higher Education and the appointed Commissioner of Higher Education.

Together, House Bills 228 and 229 would place the governance of the university system and K-12 education in the hands of the director of a state Department of Education, with an eight-member state education advisory commission.

Pupil transportation

Senate Bill 112 (Stang, D-St. Regis) reflects the recommendations of the Task Force on Pupil Transportation Finance. The bill establishes a "weighted ridership" formula for reimbursing school districts for pupil transportation, establishes a passenger count for high school programs, increases room and board rates for individual transportation contracts, and clarifies the duties of county transportation committees. The bill was heard in the Senate Education Committee on January 25. Al McMilan, superintendent of Townsend Schools and chair of the task force, presented recommendations along with other members of the task force. No testimony was presented in opposition to the bill. ■

—Madalyn Quinlan, OPI Revenue Analyst

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